

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1-18 as amended during International Preliminary Examination (IPE), without prejudice.

Please add the following new Claims:

19. (New) A method of determining a telephone number for contacting a target entity identified by a number string, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) - storing in the domain name system (DNS) of the Internet records each associated with a corresponding domain name and holding a telephone number of an entity associated with the domain name, each said domain name being related to a respective number string from which it can be derived by a process including parsing at least a substantial portion of the number string into at least a part of said domain name;

(b) - applying said process to the said number string identifying the target entity whereby to form the related domain name; and

(c) - supplying the domain name formed in step (b) to the DNS to retrieve the telephone number held in the corresponding said record.

20. (New) A method according to claim 19, wherein each said number string is in telephone-number form.

21. (New) A method of accessing a target entity over a telephone network, in which a telephone number for the target entity is determined according to claim 19 and that telephone number is then used to call the target entity over the telephone network.

22. (New) A method of determining a telephone number for contacting a target entity, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) - forming, from a number string identifying the target entity, a domain name by a process including parsing at least a substantial portion of the number string into at least a part of said domain name;

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(b) - supplying the domain name formed in step (a) to the domain name system of the Internet and receiving back from the domain name system a resource record including a telephone number.

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~~23~~. (New) A method according to claim ⁴~~22~~, wherein said number string is in telephone-number form.

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~~24~~. (New) A method of accessing a target entity over a telephone network, in which a telephone number for the target entity is determined according to claim ⁴~~22~~ and that telephone number is then used to call the target entity over the telephone network.

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~~25~~. (New) A method of determining a telephone number for contacting a target entity identified by a number string, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) - storing in a DNS-type distributed database system, records each associated with a corresponding domain name and each holding a telephone number of an entity associated with the domain name, each said domain name being related to a respective number string from which it can be derived by a process including parsing at least a substantial portion of the number string into at least a part of said domain name;

(b) - applying said process to the said number string identifying the target entity whereby to form the related domain name; and

(c) - supplying the domain name formed in step (b) to the DNS- type distributed database to retrieve the telephone number held in the corresponding said record.

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~~26~~. (New) A method according to claim ⁷~~25~~, wherein each said number string is in telephone-number form.

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~~27~~. (New) A server of the domain name system of the Internet, the server holding at least one resource record that provides a mapping from a domain name to a telephone number of a party associated with the domain name, at least a substantial portion of the domain name

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being in the form of a number string that has been parsed into plural domain-name labels.

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~~28~~. (New) A server according to claim ~~27~~⁹, wherein said number string is at least a substantial portion of a telephone number.

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~~29~~. (New) A DNS-type distributed database system¹ holding at least one resource record that provides a mapping from a domain name to a telephone number of a party associated with the domain name, at least a substantial portion of the domain name being in the form of a number string that has been parsed into plural domain-name labels.

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~~30~~. (New) A system according to claim ~~29~~¹¹, wherein said number string is at least a substantial portion of a telephone number.

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